

THE UPPER HAND

NO. 901

A SERMON
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under law, but under grace.”
Romans 6:14.*

WHAT a golden sentence! But does it not begin with a hard word? A sad and sorrowful note is sounded in that word “sin.” It was sin that blighted Eden, and drove our first parents forth to toil in weariness outside its peaceful bowers; it was sin that polluted all our blood, and left the leprosy still in our veins as a legacy of ill to the latest generation; it is sin that has been the parent of all our earthly sorrow; it is sin that will be the cause of our everlasting misery unless we are delivered from it. Never has the world seen another tyrant comparable to this! Beneath its dragon-wings the light has been eclipsed, life has dwindled, joy has expired; remember, you who fear the Lord, and are the servants of Jesus Christ; remember how many there are who are still the slaves of sin! There is no monarch who rules over so many souls as this tyrant, iniquity; millions who have departed now mourn forever the thralldom from which they never shall escape; they have perished without Christ, and under the tyranny of sin they must live forever. And millions more who are still upon the earth bow down to sin and allow it to rule over them, and this fell monster lords it over the myriads of the human race! Sad contemplation! But, perhaps, Christian, it will be to you even sadder still, when you reflect that whatever you are now, you too were once the servant of sin; you now have the will to shake off that fetter, but you once hugged the chain; you now abhor the leprosy, but you once accounted the symptoms of your disease to be indications of *health*, and you were enamored of yourself notwithstanding your revolting loathsomeness. There was a time when every affection of your nature went after evil, when you loved not the things of God, nor served Him; yet by His grace you are now renewed in the spirit of your mind. Oh, what unspeakable joy! Though you were the servant of sin, you have now received the faith once delivered to the saints, and you have obeyed, from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you. But remember the hole of the pit from where you were dug; be not exalted as though there were any goodness in your nature more than in that of other men, for had you been left to yourself, you had still been the bond-slave of evil, and so you would have continued evermore!

The prediction is encouraging. Although we have to encounter this horrible curse and deadly plague of sin, there is immunity for believers; sin shall not have dominion over them! It sounds to me like the note of a celestial harper cheering on an earthly pilgrim; it rings out like a trumpet that proclaims a coming victory! Should not every soldier fight with dauntless valor? Should not his spirit, faint and cowed, wax brave in contest with sin when he hears as the argument of a holy apostle, as the oracle of the inspired truth of God such a sure word of prophecy—“Sin shall not have dominion over you”; you have been delivered from it once, and shall never come back to its slavery again! It shall never “have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace.”

I intend to use the text in three ways: first, as a *test*; secondly, in its proper acceptation, as a *promise*; and thirdly as an *encouragement*.

I. In these words we have an important TEST of our profession.

Sin shall not have dominion over true believers. Has sin dominion over you? If so, then you are not a believer! I did not ask, “Do you sin?”—“for if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”—but I did ask, “Has sin *dominion* over you?”

Would you answer the question? Would you try yourselves? Let me remind you of *its deceitfulness*. *You may be under the dominion of sin, while yet there may be some forms of vice which you have*

successfully resisted. But it matters not what kind of transgression enslaves you, if you are after all in bondage. Whatever sin it may be that is the lieutenant in your heart, it does not matter; you are possessed of the devil. If there is but one sin that usurps authority, then sin has dominion over you. Satan does not send to all men the same temptations, nor does evil reign in every heart to gratify the same lusts or to satisfy the same propensities. The sin is adapted to the constitution; but if there is a single cherished sin in any one of you professors which is obvious you cannot conquer, and, perhaps, too apparent that you do not try, if you sit down quietly under the yoke of it, and cherish it as a friend rather than withstand it as a foe, then that sin has dominion over you, and you are not in Christ, you are not a child of God!

Does this appear unreasonably severe? I must speak the truth of God. There are some professors who are under the dominion of sin in the form of *anger*. All constitutions are not alike. Happy for those who are not troubled with the passionate temper that chafes, irritates, vexes, and annoys everybody they are associated with, as servants or companions. What shall I say of those who have such a quick, hot temper? They are like the small pot that quickly boils over, and scalds terribly. There are others whose temper is rather slower in coming up, but when it has once risen, it is horrible, and will last long, and make them sulky, so that perhaps they will never forgive. I know not how long malice will be burning in their hearts. Now, mark you, a man may have a very bad temper, and yet be a true Christian, but if any man says, “My temper is so bad that I cannot curb it; I do not try to restrain it, for it is impossible to keep it under control,” that temper has got dominion over him, and according to my text, he is not a Christian! Do you ask, “How can a man master his temper?” In reply, my brothers and sisters, I must ask, how can a man go to heaven if he does not? If the divine grace of God does not change us, and help us to bridle that lion that is within us, what has it done for us? If a man says, “I cannot help it,” I cannot help telling him that if there is no help, nothing can remain for him but despair. Only in salvation from sin is there salvation from God’s wrath. In the name of God, you *must* help it! You must overcome it, and get it down, by God’s grace, or else it will cast you down, down, down, where hope and light will never come! Do you imagine that Christ’s gospel comes into the world, and says, “You may let that one sin alone”? My Lord Jesus Christ is no lover of sin, and makes no excuse for it; He will forgive your anger, if you repent of it, and renounce it, but if you allow it, and tolerate it within your spirit, then you are strangers to His grace. O sirs, I speak the truth of God, and lie not in this respect; I have seen the grace of God change lions into lambs; men and women of hot and fierce tempers have become calm, and quiet, and gentle. Although the old man has sometimes appeared with his old propensities, and they have had to blush for him, and bite their lips to keep back the hard word, or even to walk away, perhaps, for fear they should say something which they know they would be sorry for afterwards, yet they have resisted the vile propensity, and prevailed! They have mastered their temper, and so must you. You must not be content until you have done so, for if you sit down and say, “There, I shall yield myself up to it, and let it alone,” it is clear as daylight that it has dominion over you, and you cannot be a child of God, for over the children of God it shall not have dominion! It may break out, sometimes, and hurl you down, but you will never allow it to *keep* you down! You will *never* say of it, “I cannot overcome it,” but you will fight against it till you die, and if it does break loose, it will make you wet your pillow with tears, and flee to God with a broken heart saying, “O God, forgive me, and deliver me from this horrible sin which my soul loathes!”

In some men the sin that does most easily beset takes another shape. Their propensity is to *murmur*, of which the apostle speaks when he says “Neither murmur you as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer” [1 Cor 10:10.] I know people—they are very uncomfortable people to live with—who are always grumbling at everything they meet with in this world. Trade is bad; according to the account of certain persons who were never successful, if they ever were industrious or enterprising, trade was *always* bad; it never has been good since they were born, or had anything to do with it. As for their meals, instead of being thankful to God that they have abundance while so many are hungry, they are perpetually finding fault. No, everything must be done to a turn; if there is a little too

much salt here, or a little too much pepper there, what a noise they make about such trifles! Their very garments are never right to their minds; the weather never suits them, it is “awfully hot,” or it is “dreadfully cold.” They go through the world murmuring at everything. There are men who think that this is not sin, but if it is a *virtue* to be thankful, and contented with, it is certainly a *vice* to be forever rebellious, and discontented with our lot, and at daggers drawn with every little thing that crosses our pathway! Why did the apostle put it so, “Neither murmur you as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer”? Now if any man among you murmurs, he may be a Christian needing to be purged of this defilement, but if you say, “I cannot help murmuring,” then murmuring has got *dominion* over you, and you cannot be a child of God! You must wage war against it, for if you are a child of God, neither this sin nor any other shall have dominion over you. Here, brothers and sisters, I can speak from my own heart. I do not suppose there is any person in this assembly who ever has stronger fits of depression of spirits than I have myself, personally. I feel at times, when I come into this pulpit, that instead of addressing you cheerfully, I could be a very Jeremiah, with tears and sorrows; I scarcely know why, but so it is, these constitutional mischiefs will happen to us. But shall I say I cannot help it? Do you think I will give way to it? No, but in the name of God I dare not say it! I must contend against it, lest if I should speak murmuringly I should set an ill example unto others, and thus open their mouths to offend against God. This sin is hard to overcome, but conquered it must be, for it must never have dominion over us.

With some other persons the peculiar reigning sin is *covetousness*. Oh, how tight those fingers are when they are once closed; how pleased they are when money accumulates! I do not say that they should be indifferent to business when it behooves them to buy and sell, and get gain, but why so stingy? How unhappy they are if there is a little demand made upon them for the poor, for the needy, for the church of God; how stingily they count out their three-piece; how seldom it comes to four pence they contribute; what maneuvers they practice in limiting themselves to the minimum of charity; how they grudge all they part with, and how much it seems to cost them when they give anything; it is, indeed, a bleeding which reduces their vital force when anything is given to further the interests of their Lord. Now, this covetousness is smiled at—perhaps you say, “It is a gentlemanly vice”—but I myself think it a grievous wrong, base as any fraud, for what have you that you have not received? And what have you received for which you are not accountable? And what have you earned for which you should not pay tribute? Moreover, my God has said of it, “Covetousness is idolatry.” I do not doubt but you may fall into fits of covetousness, and yet be Christians; if, however, you are *habitually* covetous, and say, “Well, I cannot help it,” then your covetousness has got dominion over you, and according to the text you cannot be a child of God, for in the children of God sin shall not have dominion! O sirs, turn that covetousness out of doors! Do as the good man did who had resolved to give a pound to some good cause, and the devil tempted him not to do it. Said he, “I will give two, now.” The devil said, “No, you will be ruining yourself with your contributions.” Said he, “I will give four.” Another temptation came, and he said, “I will give eight, and if the devil does not leave off tempting me, I do not know to what lengths I shall go, but I will be master of him somehow.” Do anything, my brothers and sisters, rather than let the golden calf run over you. Who can be a baser slave than he who bows his neck to the mammon god? He is not a manly god; do you live as if the world were made for you, and no one else?

It might so happen that some of my hearers never fell into that sin, it never reigned over them. Yet possibly another vice may be in the picture. Perhaps it is the sin of *pride*. As I have already told you, it does not matter what sin it is—if it has dominion over you, the text cuts you off from hope. Pride and arrogance are an abomination to the Lord! Know you not that the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness, that is to say the arrogant bearing of men, shall be bowed down in that day when the Lord, alone, is exalted? Ah, I know some who are proud in this very manner. They treat all those they meet with as though they felt that they were altogether of a superior order; they do not stoop to notice the common herd, the vulgar; or if not tossing their head, and consequential in their *manners*—they are not quite so foolish as that, perhaps—yet are they proud in everything else. Nobody can pray as

they do; nobody can manage anything as they can; all other Christian people are very imperfect, and poor things, but they are quite of a superior class, casting their neighbors into the shade. Now, my dear friend, I do not say that you are no Christian because you occasionally forget the lowliness of heart, and the modesty of demeanor that become you, but I do say that if pride reigns over you, and you tell me that you cannot help being proud, then you cannot be an heir of heaven, for if pride is your master, then Christ is not; and if pride reigns in your spirit, and fashions your character, depend upon it—Jesus Christ will despise your image!

The dominant sin of many who profess and call themselves Christians is *sloth—downright idleness*. They have said to themselves, “Soul, take your ease.” Therefore their faculties have become dormant. As asleep they pass their lives in protracted insensibility; they never do anything for Christ; their hands are folded, their heart is sluggish, their talents are hidden; they have no zeal, no love for souls. Pleasures, profits, and private gratifications take the place of duty and service. They like comfort remarkably much, but as to their ever enlisting in Christ’s army, it is not to be expected of them; they are an inglorious neuter to the church. Now, I will not say that the man who is sometimes slothful is not a Christian, for alas, we all have to contend with this disease; but the man in whom sloth *rules* cannot be a child of God, because no sin can have *dominion* over the man whom God has brought into the kingdom of grace!

But enough of this! I have given you sufficient tests to try yourselves. Will you, brothers and sisters, be honest enough to subject yourselves to self-examination? As I desire to do with myself, so would I have you do with yourselves. Is there a reigning sin in your hearts? Never mind what it is—is there *any sin* that reigns and rules there? Then Jesus Christ cannot be in your soul, for—

“When He comes, He comes to reign.”

Nor can the Spirit of God dwell in you, for He is the Spirit of *holiness*!

II. But now, let us take a more pleasant view of the text, regarding it as A PROMISE.

To every true believer the promise is—“Sin shall not have dominion over *you*.” It does not say that sin shall not *dwell* in you; we know that it will dwell in you while you dwell in these corruptible bodies. In the holiest man there is enough sin to destroy him if it were not for the grace of God which restrains its deadly operation; you cannot turn the old enemy completely out; he lurks, like aliens in a city ever ready to do mischief. Nor are you told that you shall never *fall into sin*. Alas, alas! Some of those who have walked very near to God have yet fallen very foully. Need I mention such as David? O may we never repeat in our lives the lapses that tarnished the reputation of such godly men! The word, however, is passed, and the security is given that “sin shall not have *dominion* over you.” The fair and lovely dove may fall into the mire, but the mire has not any dominion over it, for she rises up as quickly as she can, and away she flies, and seeks to cleanse herself at some crystal fountain, but as for the duck, put them into the mire, and the mire has dominion over its nature. So the believer may fall into sin that he hates, and defile his garments with uncleanness that he loathes. Let a sheep tumble into a ditch, and it scrambles out again; but let the swine go there, and it rolls in it, for the mire has dominion over its *nature*. There is nothing here to excuse you from watchfulness; no reason shown nor any pledge that sin may not sometimes terribly overcome you; it may carry the war right into the province of your spirit, and ravage it, and the whole of your nature may for a while, seem to be subdued, except the heart. Happily a limit is prescribed. Though the enemy may seem to conquer the territory of your manhood, yet it cannot establish a kingdom there, for it shall be driven out again, in due time and that before long. When the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of God will lift up the standard against him, and the enemy shall yet be worsted in the combat.

Notice the reason that is assigned for the assertion of the text. “Sin shall not have dominion over you, *for*”—we will look at that reason for a minute, after we have looked at a few others.

Sin cannot get confirmed dominion over the child of God because God has promised that it shall not. “Sin shall not have dominion over you.” Oh, how I love these “shalls.” There seems something grand in them. “Sin *shall* not.” Ah, Satan may come with temptation, but when God says, “Sin shall not have dominion,” it is as when the sea comes up in the fullness of its strength, and the Almighty says, “To here

shall you come, but no farther; here shall your proud waves be stopped.” If there were no other promise in the Bible but this one, and I knew no more theology than that promise teaches me, I would be most happy. “Sin shall not have dominion.” O my God, if you say it shall not, then I *know* it shall not. Has He said, and shall He not do it? Has He promised it, and shall it not stand good? If you trust in Jesus Christ, before sin can ever fully rule over you, God’s promise must be broken, and beloved, that shall never be!

Another reason sin shall not have dominion over you is *because you belong to Christ*, and He bought you at such a price that I am sure He will never give you up; He paid for you in the drops of His own heart’s blood! As a believer you are Christ’s purchased possession; do you think that He will permit evil to come and run away with the heritage that He bought at such a price? Ah, never! He who bought you will fight for you against every enemy, and preserve His blood-bought heritage unto Himself.

Sin shall not have dominion over you *because the Holy Spirit has come to dwell in you*. If you are a believer, the Holy Spirit *dwells* in you as a king within his palace, and do you think that He will be expelled by Satan and all his host of temptations?—

*“Sin is strong, but grace is stronger,
Christ than Satan more supreme.”*

It is a hard struggle between you and Satan, but between the Holy Spirit and Satan, it is an easy war. He can hold His own, and He will do it.

Moreover, *the Holy Spirit has begun a good work in you, and it is His rule never to leave His work unfinished*. The work which His wisdom begins, the arm of His strength will complete. It shall not be said of the Holy Spirit as we say of foolish builders, that they began to build but were not able to finish. The first stone of divine grace laid in a sinner’s heart secures the top stone of the sacred edifice, let hell and sin say what they will! Is not this a safeguard to prevent you from falling under the dominion of sin?

Further still, my brothers and sisters, *there is in every Christian a new Nature, a new Nature which cannot die, and which cannot sin*. Christ calls it, “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” The apostle calls it, “a living incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever.” Now, if this seed within you is incorruptible, then sin cannot corrupt it! If it abides forever, then sin cannot expel it! If the inner life is there, and it is indeed, the very life of God within your spirit, sin shall not have dominion over you!

There is another reason also, my dear brothers and sisters, that specially applies to you as a Christian—*your will is not the slave of sin, and never has been since your conversion*. You sin, but if you could, you would never sin; to will is present with you. The bent and bias of your mind are towards righteousness if you are a Christian. Now, if such is the case, sin can never get dominion over your whole nature, for the sovereignty of all your manhood lies with Him who possesses the mastery of your will and your affections. As long as the blood-red flag of Christ’s cross floats over the castle of your heart, Satan may get possession of eye-gate, and ear-gate, and mouth-gate for a while, but Christ is still King! Your will is still good towards righteousness—sin has not dominion over you! You remember how John Bunyan represents poor Feeble-Mind in the cave of Giant Slay-Good? The giant had picked him up on the road, and taken him home to devour him at his leisure. But poor Feeble-Mind said he had one comfort, for he had heard that the giant could never pick the bones of any man who was brought there against his will. Ah, and so it is! If there is a man who has fallen into sin, but still his heart cries out against the sin; if he is saying, “Lord, I am in captivity to it; I am under bondage to it; O that I could be free from it,” then sin has not dominion over him, nor shall it destroy him, but he shall be set free before long.

We now come to the reason given in the text. I want you to observe it narrowly, for it is not at first sight, easy to understand—“*Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.*” Look at this a minute. There are two principles in the world that are supposed to promote holiness. The one is the principle of law and duty, the other the principle of divine grace and faith. It is a popular notion that if you tell men what they *ought* to do, prove to them the authority of the law-giver, and show them the penalty of their wrong doing—this will enlighten their judgment, give a just bias to their inclination, and materially help to keep their conduct right. But *all the history of mankind goes to*

show that this pretext is without proof. Those who are under the law are always under sin. I will show you how it is so. The moment our mother Eve came under law, she was under law only on one point; she was not to pluck the fruit of *one* tree. She might eat as she liked of all the other fruits of the garden, and I do not know that she needed to pluck any of them, or cared particularly to do so, but the prohibition to pluck that one prompted her desire, and excited an ardent craving for the forbidden fruit. On this very morning I talked with a person in great distress, who said to me, “I read in the Word of God such-and-such a text about a sin that was unto death, and no sooner did I begin to know what that sin was, than I felt a fascination which made me want to do it.” Did you never notice the same in your children? You have a little garden you wish to keep private, and you accordingly, forbid any of the children to go into it. Well, you had better give them leave to go in, and then perhaps they will be indifferent about it, but if you say, “Now, you may go anywhere else, but just inside that particular part of the garden you must not go,” why, they one and all want to go there at once! There is a kind of curiosity about us, that if there is a Bluebeard cupboard [from 17th century fairy tale] anywhere, we must go and try to find it out! The moment we are commanded not to do a thing, such is our perverse disposition—we try to do it! Men who are under law through the haughtiness of human nature, always get to be under sin, too. There is a new crime lately come up; there is to be a communication in railway carriages between the passengers, and the guard and nobody must pull the rope unless there is sufficient reason for stopping the train. Now, I will be bound to say that somebody will be sure to do it; if you must not do it, you want to do it. Such is our nature—the law, instead of promoting holiness, does not promote it—but the flesh takes occasion to gratify its desires, lusts, and cravings by infringing its precepts. Even the terrible penalties of hell have failed to inspire fear or promote holiness. When was there ever so much sheep-stealing, and theft, and highway robbery, and forgery, as when men were hanged for these things? Then such sins were always being committed. When Draco wrote his laws in blood, and every sin was punished with death, crime was far more rife than it is even now; law has proved its utter powerlessness to protect men from the dominion of sin!

There is another principle, and it is steadfastly believed by some of us to be fruitful in every good word and work, a main instigator to righteousness and true holiness. Let me explain it. It is the principle of divine grace on the part of God, and operates by faith in the heart of man. It is on this wise. Grace does not say to a man, “You must do this or you shall be punished,” but it says this, “God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven you all your sins. You are saved; heaven is yours, and you shall enter into the bliss of the angels before long. Now, for the love you bear to God, who has done this for you, what will you do for Him?” This does not appear to furnish, at first sight, a very powerful motive, but it has been proved in the history of Christ’s church to be the most potent creator of virtue that was ever heard of. God’s great love wherewith He loved us has been indelibly impressed on the heart; the wondrous sacrifice of Christ has been verily depicted before the eyes; a compelling power, strong as death, has availed to consecrate the lives of those who have felt the sacred rapturous spell, and dissolved by mercy unmerited, and grace unexpected, they have surrendered themselves in terms like these—

*“Now, for the love I bear His name,
What was my gain I count my loss!
My former pride I call my shame,
And nail my glory to His cross.”*

Look at the lives of the apostles and the martyrs, and those earnest confessors of Christ who did resist to blood striving against sin! Why, my brothers and sisters, Christ has had such servants as Moses never had! He has had such self-devotion, such consecration, such zeal, purely and simply the result of gratitude as mere law and duty never could create! Now, because you are not under the law, you Christian people, God does not say to you, “Do this and I will save you; do not do that, and I will damn you.” But He says to you, “I have saved you beyond the fear of damnation; you are Mine, My children, My favorites; now, what will you do for Me?” Such is the motive power, such the irresistible instinct of love and gratitude that sin shall never get dominion over you!

I will give you an illustration. I rather think that I am indebted for it to a passage in Cowper's works which I cannot at this moment recall. You have a servant who engages to do his allotted work for the wages that you give him—with no other motive than his stipend, and no further interest in his employment than to get over it as quickly as possible—he is under law. Notice how he watches your eyes, that he may do, while you are looking at him, that which he *must* do. He renders you a service of a certain sort, but it is generally very poor, and not much to be accounted of. But you have another servant, one who is old and tried, and honest to the backbone. He remembers you when a boy, and used to live with your father, then. Now, if you could not pay him his wages, it would not destroy his attachment to you, or his zeal for your interest. If you were to discharge him, I dare say he would tell you that if you did not know when you had a good servant, he knew when he had a good master, and he meant to stick by you! Notice him, how he watches your interests; he will not have anything wasted through neglect; he will not have you defrauded in anything for lack of oversight, and if you were ill in the middle of the night, he would somehow or other discover it, and be off for a doctor before you could call him. If he traveled with you, what care and attention he would pay you! He would be ready to risk his life for you. You could not buy such service as his for gold—you could never get it as a mere matter of duty. *Love* makes him do for you what mere duty never could. So, even if the law did make good servants, as it never does, yet it never could make as good a servant as grace and love. Indeed, the motive of love is always the stronger, and if it came to the pinch, and your man who serves you for your pay could make more out of betraying you than he could by being faithful to you, you know what he would do! But your other servant who serves you out of love would no more think of going beyond or imposing upon you than of sacrificing himself! He would, perhaps, be like the Roman slave who was tortured to death sooner than he would run and point out where his master was concealed because his master was sought in order to be slain. Love! Love is the mighty principle! You Christian people are not under the law. It is true, the *moral* law is your rule of life, but it has no tyrannous government over you. Christ fulfilled the law for you! It has been kept! You owe it no obedience as a matter of mere justice; you have been delivered from that, and being now under the law of love and not under the law of force and duty, sin never shall have dominion over you.

III. But I cannot tarry longer, as our time is gone. The last point is to view the text as AN ENCOURAGEMENT.

In this assembly I fear there are *not a few who are strangers to the holy jealousy which keeps a watch over the heart, and a guard upon the lips lest they should sin*. I wish we were all so on the alert—that we all kept our garments scrupulously white. Dear brothers and sisters, cultivate a holy jealousy! Be very watchful, and let this text animate you—"Sin shall not have dominion over you." In this assembly, too, there are some who are consciously *very weak*. You feel your depraved nature to be vigorous, and you are afraid that the divine grace within you is insufficient for the trials that beset you. My dear brethren, let this encourage you; though you may be very weak, if you are a child of God, sin shall no more get dominion over the weak than over the strong! Though the life within you may be but a spark, it shall not be quenched! Though it is but as a bruised reed, it shall not be broken. The text is for the weak as well as the strong—"Sin shall not have dominion over you."

In this company there may be those who are just now *fighting with some great sin*. We noticed last Monday night the prayer of a dear brother evidently coming out of the bitterness of his soul, when he said, "O God, help me, or I shall fall! Help me, or I shall fall!" Ah, brothers and sisters, we all know what it is to get to the pinch, when it is hand-to-hand work with some inbred corruption! You who do not have strong passions may be very thankful, for they who have a lusty manhood are often drifted by terrible winds, and have a hard fight to keep clear of the rocks of sin. But oh, you warring Christians, you believers who are fighting—here is consolation for you! Put this bottle of cool water to your lips, and be refreshed! "Sin shall not have dominion over you." You shall conquer yet! Fight on!

Possibly there may be some here *lately converted*—some man who was a drunkard. Your chains are broken, but there are some links that are left hanging, and sometimes they will catch hold of a nail, and

you will think you are tied up again. Oh, but, my brothers and sisters, if you have given your heart to Christ, sin shall not have dominion over you! You shall yet be helped! Probably there is a man here whose life was very bad before his conversion, and he says to himself, “I have to go and mix up with some of the people I used to sin with, and they laugh at me, and lay all sorts of traps for me. I am afraid I shall yet go back.” O cling to the cross! Lay hold of the garments of your dear Lord and Master, for if you trust Him, though you are but a child lately born into the family, “Sin shall not have dominion over you.”

Perhaps I address a *backslider* tonight. O my brother, my sister—you have gone into sin—you have defiled your garments. Perhaps the church of God has had to cast you out; but do you now hate your sin? Have you now, again, began to cry unto God for His mercy? Does the Lord help you to look to the cross, and rest in the work of Jesus? If so, be of good courage, still, for if you are His child, sin may get a temporary advantage, but it shall never have permanent dominion! You have sinned very terribly—it is an awful thing—God have mercy upon you for it; you will have to go with broken bones all your life, but you shall still be saved, for sin shall not have dominion over you!

And now, the last sentence is this—if there is anyone here desirous to be saved from the reigning power of sin within his body, however much sin may now domineer over him—if he will come to Christ, my Lord and Master, and put his trust in Him, He will take care to deliver him altogether from sin, beginning the good work in him this very night, and carrying it on till He at last brings him to heaven, without a spot or a sin, to see the face of God! And this is for every one of you who will trust Christ! O that you may trust in Him now and God shall have the glory while you will have the great salvation! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ROMANS 6.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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